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ITEM NO: 01

DATE: 15 NOVEMBER 1974

SUBJECT: INDIAN CRITICISM OF US ACTIVITIES IN INDIAN OCEAN

REF: FBIS 43, 15 NOV 74;

25X1A6a

TODAY IN NEW DELHI A CONFERENCE ORGANIZED BY INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST FRONT ORGANIZATIONS ADOPTED A RESOLUTION DEMANDING THE IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OF THE US TASK FORCE THAT ENTERED THE INDIAN OCEAN LAST WEEK. THE CONFERENCE ALSO CALLED FOR REMOVAL OF ALL FOREIGN BASES IN THE REGION.

THE CONFERENCE WAS GIVEN SOME STATURE BY AN INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTER Y. B. CHAVAN ON NOVEMBER 14. THE INDIANS HAVE TOLD US EMBASSY OFFICIALS THAT CHAVAN'S PARTICIPATION WAS ONLY A "COURTESY" AND THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT BE

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OFFICIALLY REPRESENTED AT ANY OTHER SESSION DURING THE 3-DAY
CONFERENCE.

CHAVAN'S REMARKS WERE FULLY CONSISTENT WITH INDIA'S WELL ESTABLISHED OPPOSITION TO MAJOR POWER PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, ITS OPPOSITION TO THE EXPANSION OF US NAVAL FACILITIES ON THE ISLAND OF DIEGO GARCIA, AND ITS SUPPORT FOR A PROPOSED UN CONFERENCE ON THE INDIAN OCEAN.

THE FOREIGN MINISTER, HOWEVER, DID NOT MENTION THE PRESENCE OF US FLEET UNITS IN THE AREA, NOR DID HE SINGLE OUT EITHER THE US OR USSR FOR CRITICISM. INSTEAD HE REFERRED TO THE GENERAL PROBLEM OF GREAT POWER RIVALRY IN SURROUNDING WATERS. HIS SPEECH WAS BALANCED AND MODERATE IN COMPARISON TO OTHERS THAT FOLLOWED.

CHAVAN'S APPEARANCE MAY HAVE BEEN A SOP TO NOISY INDIAN
LEFTISTS WHO HAVE BEEN PRESSING THE GOVERNMENT HARD ON THE INDIAN
OCEAN ISSUE, AND ARE UNHAPPY WITH THE MORE FAVORABLE TREND IN
INDO-US RELATIONS. E-2 IMPDET.H

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DATE: 15 NOV 74

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INIT: CIA OPS CTR

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References

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GUTHRIE & ALLEN, 1987, 1988, 1989

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